



REP. MAXINE WATERS TO SPEAK AT 2018 HAC RURAL HOUSING CONFERENCE.

On-site registration will begin at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, December 4 for the conference, to be held December 4-7 at the Capital Hilton in Washington, DC. Other confirmed speakers include Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, Senator Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), and HUD Secretary Ben Carson. The conference agenda is online.

FY19 spending set to expire December 7 for part of U.S. government.

USDA and HUD, along with a number of other federal departments and agencies, are still operating under a continuing resolution that ends December 7. Because of the ongoing dispute on spending for a U.S.-Mexico border wall, it is not yet clear whether Congress will approve appropriations, use a short-term continuing resolution to extend negotiations, or adopt a long-term CR to keep FY18 funding levels in place for the rest of FY19, which began October 1. President Trump could veto whatever Congress passes, leading to a partial government shutdown.

Affordable Housing Program regulation changes finalized.

Amendments to the program's governing rule make numerous changes, including giving individual Federal Home Loan Banks additional authority to allocate their AHP funds and authorizing the Banks to establish separate competitive funds that target specific affordable housing needs in their districts. The changes will take effect gradually through January 1, 2021. For more information, contact Ted Wartell, FHFA, 202-649-3157.

RD offers energy efficiency loans to rural electric service providers for relending.

Rural Energy Savings Program loans are available to utility districts, local governments, nonprofits, and other entities that provide rural electric service. Recipients will reloan the funds to customers for energy efficiency improvements or to replace a manufactured housing unit with another, energy efficient manufactured home. Letters of intent are due September 30, 2019. For more information, contact Robert Coates, RUS, 202-260-5415.

Rural Broadband Access Loans and Loan Guarantees available.

The Rural Utilities Service will accept applications through September 30, 2019 from nonprofits, tribes and state or local governments for construction, improvement and acquisition of broadband facilities and equipment. Applications will be evaluated every 90 days. Loan guarantees will not be available in FY19. For more information, contact Shawn Arner, RUS, 202-720-0800.

GAO recommends ways to improve tribal access to broadband.

A 2018 Federal Communications Commission analysis estimated that 35% of Americans living on tribal lands lack broadband service, compared to 8% of Americans overall. FCC concluded that increased access to available radio frequency spectrum could expand broadband service on tribal lands. Tribal Broadband: FCC Should Undertake Efforts to Better Promote Tribal Access to Spectrum, a new Government Accountability Office report, recommends how the FCC could increase tribes' ability to use available spectrum. For more information, contact Mark Goldstein, GAO, 202-512-2834.

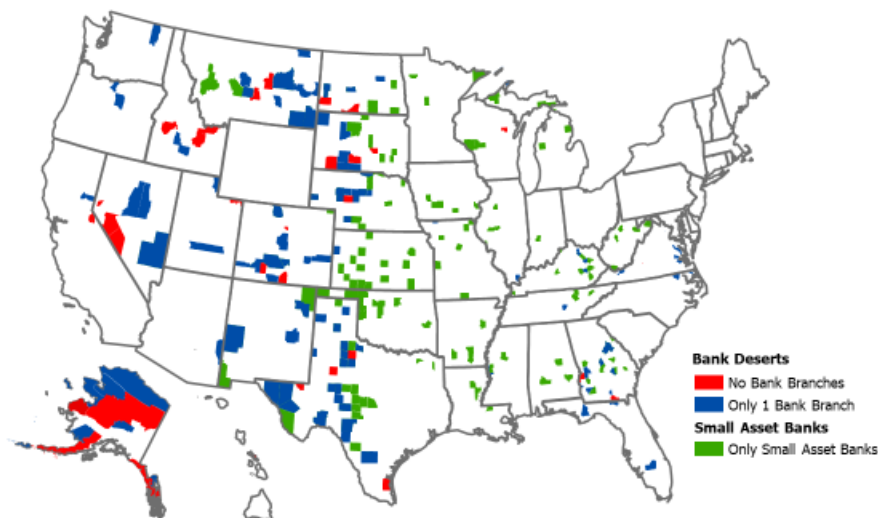
Rural statistic: rural bank deserts.

An increasing number of rural areas lack any access to traditional depository institutions and their products. Approximately 274 counties – almost exclusively rural – have one or less bank branch or have only small-asset lender branches, limiting their ability to fully engage with resources such as the

Community Reinvestment Act. For more information on rural banks and CRA, please visit [HAC's resource page](#) on the Community Reinvestment Act in rural America.

Many Rural Communities are Severely Underbanked

Approximately 274 rural counties have one or no banks, or only small asset banks



Source: Housing Assistance Council (HAC) Tabulations of FDIC Data

USDA RD posts several guidance documents on multifamily properties.

[Administrative Notice 4862](#) explains the process of obtaining professional resources for large portfolio deals and the use of the contract method for construction and/or renovation of new or existing multifamily properties. Allowable expenses that can be paid by project income in Section 514 and 515 rental properties are clarified in an [Unnumbered Letter \(Sept. 21, 2018\)](#). Changes to policies and procedures for supervised bank accounts of multifamily properties are explained in an [Unnumbered Letter \(Sept. 28, 2018\)](#). An [Unnumbered Letter \(Oct. 26, 2018\)](#) provides guidance in the development of rent incentive options to address high vacancies.

Coalition analyzes HUD intent to reduce public housing stock.

A November 13 [letter from HUD](#) to public housing agency directors promotes the “repositioning” of their units with “a goal to reposition 105,000 public housing units to a more sustainable platform by September 30, 2019.” The National Low Income Housing Coalition posted the [letter](#) and an [analysis](#). Some units could be converted to vouchers through the Rental Assistance Demonstration and others demolished. HUD’s letter promises forthcoming guidance on two other options: voluntary conversions to vouchers and releasing the “declarations of trust” that give HUD a formal legal interest in public housing property.

Authority for environmental matters and single-family loan servicing transferred away from Rural Housing Service.

USDA has [announced](#) that some authority related to environmental laws has been transferred to the Rural Development Business Center from the Rural Housing Service, Rural Business-Cooperative Service and Rural Utilities Service. Authority to service RHS single-family loans is also moving to the RD Business Center. Anne Hazlett, Assistant to the Secretary for RD, has been given the power to transfer loan servicing for multifamily housing, community facilities, RUS and RBS to the RD Business Center in the future. For more information, contact [Melissa McClellan](#), USDA, 202-720-5565.

Disaster recovery funding underused for vulnerable populations.

In a November 15 [webinar](#) the Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition explained how federal disaster assistance programs have failed to address the housing needs of disaster survivors, especially for low-income and minority populations. The coalition recommends congressional oversight hearings and legislation to ensure survivors get the housing disaster recovery assistance they need on a timely basis without racial disparities.

Need capital for your affordable housing project?

HAC's [loan funds](#) provide low interest rate loans to support single- and multifamily affordable housing projects for low-income rural residents throughout the U.S. and territories. Capital is available for all types of affordable and mixed-income housing projects, including preservation, farmworker, senior and veteran housing. HAC loan funds can be used for pre-development, site acquisition, site development and construction/rehabilitation. Contact HAC's loan fund staff at haclloanfund@ruralhome.org, 202-842-8600. (Repeating announcement)

Please note: HAC is not able to offer loans to individuals or families. Borrowers must be nonprofit or for-profit organizations or government entities (including tribes).